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REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated August 10, 2006. Claims 1-15 remain pending in this application. Claims 1 and 8 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

On the merits, the Office Action rejected Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Augusto (U.S. Patent Application No. 2005/0167709 A1; hereinafter "Augusto").

In response to the rejection by the Examiner, Applicants submit a declaration under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 to establish invention of the subject matter of the rejected claim prior to the effective date of the reference of the reference or activity on which the rejection is based. Such declarations of Applicants/Inventors Pierre Woerlee, Gert Hooft, and Jisk Holleman are attached to this response to office action and fully provide the details regarding establishing invention of the subject matter of the rejected Claims 1-15 prior to the effective date of Augusto, the rejecting reference. Augusto is a pending U.S. patent application with a filing date of March 2, 2005, and a provisional application filing date of September 19, 2002. The attached §1.131 Declarations show that the Applicants conceived the invention embodied in the current patent application at the latest by February 25, 2002, which clearly occurred before the Augusto date of September 19, 2002. Therefore, the invention of the subject matter in the current patent application as claimed in Claims 1-15 occurred before the earliest priority/effective date of the rejecting reference, Augusto, and thereby Augusto is not a proper reference on which to provide rejections of Claims 1-15. Therefore, Applicants request that the rejections under §102(e) by Augusto be withdrawn by the Examiner and Claims 1-15 be allowed to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the currently pending claims are clearly patentably distinguishable over the cited and applied

references. Accordingly, entry of this amendment, reconsideration of the rejections of the claims over the references cited, and allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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